

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claim 1 has been limited to a viscosity modifier for a plastisol composition containing a (meth)acrylic polymer that comprises at least one of zinc octylate, sodium laurate and a metal chelate compound. Support for this amendment is found in original Claim 1 and at specification page 6, line 1 and page 14, lines 9-10. These same portions of the specification support the amendments to Claim 7. New Claims 11-14, and 15-19, are supported by Claims 1, 6 and 7. Claims 20 and 21 are supported by original Claims 9 and 10. Finally, new claims 22-25 are supported at specification page 10, lines 12-17 and page 14, lines 23-25. No new matter has been entered.

As described in detail in the present specification, the invention viscosity modifier for plastisol compositions containing a (meth)acrylic polymer and related plastisol compositions are capable of providing low viscosity without the necessity of including a large amount of plasticizer or diluent, thereby suppressing the volatilization of organic substances, etc. and avoiding a reduction in the mechanical strength of the eventual article produced. This is especially true for the preferred embodiment now claimed containing (meth)acrylic polymer, as the resin causes no emission of harmful gases during incineration and makes it easy to balance viscosity stability during storage with the plasticizer-retaining properties of, e.g., the ultimate molded product or cured film. See specification page 14, lines 9-12. The references applied against the claims do not disclose or suggest what Applicant is now claiming.

In particular, GB '902 relates to vinyl chloride plastisols and a fluidifier that is a condensation product of ethylene or propylene oxide with an aliphatic diamine. U.S. '943 relates to stabilized PVC resins containing calcium or zinc neodecanoate. U.S. '580 relates to polyvinylhalide plastisols containing cyclohexyl amines and naphthenic acids. U.S. '433 similarly relates to PVC plastisols using nitrogen-containing carbon compounds as viscosity-

reducing agents. U.S. '257 also relates to PVC plastisols, this time having a wax-like material as stabilizer, including fatty acids and their ammonium and aliphatic amine salts. U.S. '639 relates to plastisols including those based on (meth)acrylates but uses a protective colloid or emulsifier as stabilizer, none of which correspond to or suggest zinc octylate, sodium laurate or a metal chelate compound. SU '205 relates to a PVC, not (meth)acrylate, plastisol containing Ca and Ba stearate, a C₁₈ carboxylic acid. U.S. '312 relates to anti-static imidazoline salts for resins such as vinyl chlorides. Finally, U.S. 267 relates to a molding material, not a plastisol, containing hydrolyzed ethylene-vinyl acetate copolymer and glass fiber, optionally using a viscosity modifier like, e.g., the hydrogen salts of certain organic acids (e.g., disodium hydrogenphosphate) and chelate compounds containing titanium or aluminum. See col. 3, lines 9-29.

Thus, the cited references differ from what is claimed in that they either relate to plastisols other than those based on (meth)acrylates, do not disclose the claimed viscosity modifiers, relate to polymer resins or melts rather than plastisols, or some combination thereof. In view of this situation, and in view of the amendments to the claims presented above, Applicants respectfully request the reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejections, and the passage of this case to Issue.

Respectfully submitted,

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